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SUBJECT: SPANISH PERMREP PAYS INTRODUCTORY CALL ON
AMBASSADOR RICE

11. (SBU) SUMMARY. Spanish Permrep Juan Antonio Yanez-Barnuevo reviewed Spain's UN priorities in a March 9 introductory meeting with Ambassador Rice. He observed that the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations set to take place in Istanbul on April 6-7 would coincide with President Obama's trip to Europe, and he hoped that President Obama would be able to attend the Forum. Ambassador Yanez-Barnuevo welcomed the prospect of United States participation in the Human Rights Council, and said also that Spain would be a candidate for the HRC in 2010. He pledged Spanish support for the SYG's Personal Envoy for the Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, and hoped that Ross would be able to make progress in relations not only between Morocco and Polisario, but also between Morocco and Algeria. He expressed satisfaction with the High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All that had taken place in Madrid in late January, but he said the disparate organizations working the issue would need to present an attractive package in order to attract leaders to a Food Summit in Autumn 2009, as had been proposed by FAO Director-General Diouf at the Madrid meeting. The Spanish Permrep also described Spain's efforts, as a co-chair of the General Assembly's system-wide coherence effort, to build consensus around a new UN gender architecture. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) Spanish Permrep Juan Antonia Yanez-Barnuevo paid an introductory call on Ambassador Rice on March 9, 2009 and outlined his UN priorities. At the outset, Yanez-Barnuevo, delivered a letter from the Foreign Minister of Spain, Miguel Angel Moratinos, seeking the participation of the United States in the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations to be held in Istanbul on April 6-7. Yanez-Barnuevo told Rice he was happy to hear that President Obama would be visiting Turkey as part of his early April European trip, and said he hoped that the President would consider attending the Forum.

13. (SBU) Yanez-Barnuevo also offered his support for the new UN Personal Envoy of the SYG for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, who had returned to New York after a trip to the region. Yanez Barnuevo hoped that Ross' good-offices could "break the log-jam" in the negotiations over the Western Sahara. He thought Ross could usefully help to build confidence between Morocco and the Polisario, but also should try to further the bilateral relationship between Morocco and Algeria outside the context of Western Sahara's status.

14. (SBU) Turning to the High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All held in Madrid on January 26-27, 2009, Yanez-Barnuevo expressed satisfaction that it had succeeded in creating a task force that included the whole UN system together with NGOs and private entities, and that the U.S. had decided to join the effort as well. Commenting on the proposal by the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization for a food summit in Fall, 2009, Yanez-Barnuevo acknowledged that the task force needed to be ready with a package of proposals that would attract leaders. He did not know if the EU had

taken a position on the proposed summit.

¶5. (SBU) Yanez-Barnuevo acknowledged the United States' review of its engagement in the Human Rights Council, and said Spain would like to see the U.S. in the council. He noted that Spain, which lost a 2008 bid for one of two seats by one vote to the United Kingdom and France, was running again for a seat in 2010, but that so far there were only two announced candidates for the two seats.

¶6. (SBU) Ambassador Yanez-Barnuevo also outlined Spain's efforts, as a co-chair of the General Assembly's system-wide coherence initiative, to create a new "gender architecture" in the UN from the many disparate offices and agencies that currently address gender issues. Ambassador Rice expressed support for this effort and said reforming the UN's gender office would be an early priority of hers. Referring to an ongoing discussion among member states about whether to create the new gender office within the Secretariat or whether to make it an autonomous fund or program (for example, like UNICEF or UNDP), Rice asked Yanez-Barnuevo for his views on a "composite entity", that would contain elements of both options. Yanez-Barnuevo said a composite entity would need have both operational and normative pillars. He thought the operational pillar could be in the mold of UNIFEM, which is working well in the field. It would need to retain sufficient autonomy, flexibility and accountability to do what needs to be done in the field. Yanez-Barnuevo expressed some frustration by efforts of some GA members from the G-77 to "put the brakes on" reform of the gender architecture, by tying it with other issues (e.g., Security Council Reform). He thought that tying issues together was "a recipe for paralysis" in the system-wide coherence effort.

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